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July 4, 2007

"Today, July 4th, we celebrate our nation's 231st birthday. In 1776, our founding fathers signed the Declaration of Independence, proclaiming America's freedom to the world. We have much for which to be thankful.

"As we embark upon our celebrations, let us pause to remember the sacrifices of those in our armed services, especially those who have paid the ultimate price to protect our freedom, and those engaged today in Iraq, Afghanistan, and all over the world. We owe them and their families a great debt of gratitude.

"Yet on this occasion we must also acknowledge that we are not all truly free. True independence will only come when all Americans share in the benefits of the world's wealthiest nation, and when we ensure that our policies protect both our people and our planet.

"To achieve true independence, we must build an education system that provides a strong foundation for every child, whether they live in the poorest neighborhood or the richest enclave. We must ensure that our colleges and universities are within the financial means of every student who desires to attend. We must create a rational energy policy that frees us from our addiction to fuels that harm our world's climate. And we must create a universal healthcare system that provides access to healthcare for every man, woman and child in America. When we have accomplished these tasks, we will truly be on our way to real independence in America.

"May this great nation continue to strive for the blessings of independence, freedom, and liberty."

-Lt. Governor Garamendi